

Reviews of Claudio Silvestrin's work

(Extracted and compiled from his office website on August 2013)

Silvestrin's work has an innate classicism that lends itself to longevity. A modern-day disciple of the great Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio (Silvestrin married his second wife in the Villa Godi), he designs buildings and interiors with a Vitruvian penchant for proportion. The principles on display in the Paris apartment, he believes, 'had meaning 1,000 years ago, have meaning now and will continue to have one 1,000 years from now'.

Matt Gibberd for World of Interiors Magazine, October 2012

Through stable, quiet and serene architecture (rather than through loud and ostentatious forms) the soul gives up fighting against its earthly fate and finds peace'. This intriguing aphorism by architect Claudio Silvestrin forms the crux of his work, and appears in his latest tome, 'The non-materiality of the material - Claudio Silvestrin' - itself an altogether calming 366 page journey from one minimalist project to the next, capturing the essence of Silvestrin's work over the last 20 years.

Almost bordering on monastic, the calm serene forms of a Silvestrin building have even compelled Alberoni to describe it in the book as 'a place in which fragmented man can rediscover the roots of his culture and tradition, through earth, water, air, fire, wood, stone and light.'

www.wallpaper.com, 19 August 2011

Silvestrin is aware that living in this pared-down, minimalist way is not for everyone: "It isn't a whimsical, fashionable style, and it requires discipline and plenty of storage to make it work". Maybe so, but for all its discipline, it does have a monastic calmness that makes you relax and forget about everything that's going on beyond the walls of the building.

The Times Magazine, 26 March 2011

Silvestrin is an artist in the more important sense that “his understanding of space is exceptional” says Warren Miro. Armani too, for whom the architect has worked with on 26 projects, heaps praise on Silvestrin saying that his work has “a complexity behind a simplicity that is so unspectacular, so understated, as to render it spectacular.. These days we’ve become used to architecture being just another branch of the construction industry. Silvestrin, on the other hand, thinks that architecture is a calling not unlike the priesthood.

Blueprint magazine n. 278, May 2009

To Claudio Silvestrin architecture is the expression of a profound thought process; A contribution to heighten man’s awareness of an evolution which is not merely technological and materialistic, but which encompasses both matter and spirit, is modern yet archaic, anthropological and ecological.

Water rather than plasticity, stone rather than cement, emptiness versus the unconditional exploitation of space, elegance as opposed to sensationalism, the purity of the symbol rather than the theatrically seductive, the magic of light rather than light as the degree of luminosity; all of these characteristics express an intimate and highly individual feeling for architecture which emanates from various projects scattered through out the world. Different stations, different lengths of creation, but one single powerful message; the will to combat the death of the spirit...

...The silence encloses the essential gesture unto which, the capacity of communicating the intensity of emotion, is thereby assigned.

It is the shading, which is utilised in the chiaroscuro technique in order to emphasize the contours of things. It is the “tacit” in the music of John Cage: the substitution of organized sounds with the sounds of the surrounding environment.

In order to listen to nature silence is needed. And in silence as in music, the concept of duration is paramount and equally pertinent.

IO NO!

From Video Exhibition of Claudio Silvestrin’s most recent projects, Diocesano Museum, Milan 2008 **by Silvia Robertazzi**

Quote: “I am working with Claudio Silvestrin who did my apartment in New York. There’s this Japanese dude in the same complex as me and his crib was just so impeccable I would come over and ask him for advice. So one day he said, “Look, I am just going to tell you some architects,” and he named Claudio Silvestrin John Paulson and Antonio Citterio. These people are just, like, so at the top of their game, like ridiculous, award winning, that they don’t really do apartments like that. So I reached out to Claudio, then I went to my neighbour and told him, “Claudio’s coming next month.” He must have wanted to spit up his drink.”

Complex – Magazine for Men September 2007

A long time has passed since the last supper out at Iohan –it’s time to check it out again. After all, the restaurant, located in the historical vault of the Graz cottage, is considered a gastronomic style icon since ten years. Pleasantly surprising: Claudio Silvestrin’s architecture has outlived the years fantastically. Midget tables, thick columns, white loose covers, small blue backlit windows – all this is still very effective.

Ute Baumhackl, **Lebensart**, 2007

‘Many architectural forms today demand attention and - in some cases - invite envy. Thus, it is refreshing to come across a building which veers away from this sensationalist contemporary trend. Claudio Silvestrin continued his visually unassuming approach to design with the Museum of Contemporary Art - Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin, Italy. The museum manifests itself in a linear form, understated and silent; a work of art that also stands as a reminder of timeless architecture that is solid, simple, clear and rigorous.’

Abdul Aziz Draim, **Cubes**, January 2005, pp 66-70

‘Claudio Silvestrin’s now-familiar architecture, whereby buildings become elemental compositions of dense mass, undecorated planes, and luminous emptiness, induce the tranquility necessary for contemplating works of art. As an architect he is content to stand back, to provide a timeless frame within which life of whatever kind can take place.’

Penny McGuire, **The Architectural Review**, No 1273, March 2003, pp 80-83

'All the recurring motifs of Silvestrin's design opus are present in his own interior. There is the 18-foot floor-to-ceiling doorway that closes the space from the outside world with the same finality as the sealing of an Egyptian pharaoh's tomb. There is the narrow space that gives access to the bathroom - a stone chamber devoid of bath or visible plumbing. Again, Silvestrin built an invisible cupboard to house "Tessa's collection of beauty products."

Silvestrin is one of the few designers who lives with the discipline he demands from his clients. He has no interest in fashion or ephemeral trends. A constant in an increasingly skittish discipline, Silvestrin is the still, small voice that speaks so much louder than all the verbose decorators and grand architects currently making noise.'

James Sherwood, **World of Interiors**, June 2001, pp 102-109

'There is no doubt that Claudio Silvestrin is the most admired Minimalist in the current cell of monastic works. His work is simply sublime; its effortless serenity disguises the dedicated control necessary to achieve such exquisite austerity. Seriously, Silvestrin is a sculptor of space and is a great artist in the same way as Mondrian, Rothko, Arp and Caro are great artists.'

Terence Conran, **World of Interiors**, August 2000, pp 17-18

'Silvestrin's Taglio bowl, a raw stone fruit bowl with one knife-thin vertical incision as the sole detail, is so simple you might expect to find the prototype in a Neolithic cave painting - and so impeccably modern you can imagine copies in museums of the future. If you need a definition of minimalism done right, look no further than this bowl.'

James Sherwood, **Financial Times Weekend**, March 4 2000, p XII

'Widely credited as the great master of minimalism, architect Claudio Silvestrin is the designer of Riverside One. Monastic simplicity characterises his work, a perpetual quest to maximise light and space.'

'Bare', **Modern Times, BBC 2**, March 1998

'Claudio Silvestrin has designed Calvin Klein's new Collection store in Paris ... Fashion is an ephemeral business but still there is some correspondence between the enduring simplicity of Klein's designs and Silvestrin's austere inclinations. His elemental architecture of light and abstract form suggests infinity and timelessness amid western transience. The spaces he creates out of stone, opalescent glass and planes of soft light and shadow convey a sense of mystery and transcendence of the material world.'

Penny McGuire, **The Architectural Review**, No 1207, September 1997, pp 82-84

'Jopling's new space is literally a White Cube designed by architect Claudio Silvestrin; the diffused light from two narrow vertical windows gives on to the perfectly balanced volume of the single room, which gives one the sense of entering the inner sanctum of some religious space.'

Richard Dyer, **Art Press**, 1993

'In the villa embellishment of any kind is completely absent. Yet there is an ease of movement from space to space and within each space that rarely exists in houses with more traditional room plans. Within the gigantic, sheltering walls there is a visual serenity that comes from a refusal to indulge in decorative details. "With the minimum number of objects, materials, figures, lines, colours, signs,' writes Silvestrin, "the invisibility of space almost vanishes: space is, at least intuitively, visible.'"

Doris Lockhart Saatchi, **Vogue Decoration**, No 30, February - March 1991, pp 92-97